

THE ILLINOIS PROGRAM FOR EDU-  
CATING HANDICAPPED CHILDREN IN  
THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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## THE ILLINOIS PROGRAM FOR EDUCATING HANDICAPPED CHILDREN IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

MARY ZAHROBSKY

THE general principle that all children should be given an opportunity to receive a free education in a public school is one that has been accepted in theory by the American states, even though in practice there are still many children, especially those who are physically or mentally handicapped, whose right to an education is frequently disregarded.

Physical handicaps should not deprive children of academic training or of a chance to develop what talents and capacities they have. To do so is a shortsighted policy which adds to the burdens of society if the handicapped person, because he lacks an education, becomes socially maladjusted and economically unproductive. As the director of the Illinois program of education of exceptional children points out: "The wise state finds it better policy to spend money and effort in helping the handicapped child to reach his maximum possible development and self-sufficiency than to neglect his training and relegate him to a life of dependency."<sup>1</sup>

Special educational facilities in the local public schools should therefore be provided for children who are blind, visually defective, deaf, hard-of-hearing, crippled, or suffering from a chronic illness or some other type of defect that prevents their deriving the greatest possible benefit from their instruction in a regular class. Mentally defective children

who are educable also require special training within the limits of their capacities, if they are to become assets and not liabilities to the community. While the idea of providing special educational services to physically and mentally handicapped children has been accepted for many years, similar services for socially maladjusted children are relatively new. There is, however, a growing conviction among educators and other interested individuals that children who give evidence of emotional instability or behavior problems are just as much in need of special and individual treatment as are the physically and mentally handicapped. It is believed that if problem children are given the special attention they need, many could achieve a more satisfactory adjustment not only in school but also at home and in the community. Admittedly, a special educational program cannot provide new homes or new community environments, but it can do much to change the child's attitude toward, and his response to, the unfavorable conditions affecting his life outside the school.

Special facilities and services designed to help physically, mentally, and socially handicapped children to adjust to the community and to prepare them for work within their limitations are feasible. In rural areas special educational provisions are not so easily established, unless several school districts join in such a project to provide transportation for those pupils who could not otherwise get to the center where such special facilities are maintained. Other possibilities of

<sup>1</sup> Ray Graham (ed.), *The Illinois Plan for Exceptional Children: The Physically Handicapped* ("Circular Series A," No. 12) (Springfield: Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1944), p. 6.



titudes will permit them to regard it as evidence of strength rather than of weakness.

In considering the place of social case work in modern society, I have emphasized its contribution to the field of social work as a whole because of a deep conviction that it cannot go forward alone. It is only as it becomes an integral part of the profession of social work, serving and being served by social welfare administration, community organization, and social research, that it will attain its own aims in decent measure. The capacity of case workers to function in this interdependent relationship will depend on professional education in modern society. In this connection, it is clear that social case work must have a vital place in a comprehensive curriculum for all social workers.<sup>14</sup>

There is general recognition of the fact that man's mastery of nature, in the form

of scientific discoveries and technological achievement, "has proved a curse rather than a blessing in the hands of men ignorant of their own personalities and of human relationships."<sup>15</sup> It has been said that social work has its distinctive contribution "to understand the interaction of external pressures and internal strains in person-to-person, person-to-group, and person-to-situation adjustments, [that is,] scientific understanding of the psycho-social quality in all human relationships."<sup>16</sup> As we move into an era in which the gap between the natural and the social sciences will be bridged, it can be expected that the profession of social work will have a decisive contribution to make and that it will therefore become an integral part of the social structure rather than the adjunct it has been in the past. Social case work must find its responsible place within the profession, in relation to other professional fields and within society.

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<sup>14</sup> Edith Abbott, *Social Welfare and Professional Education* (rev. and enl. ed.; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1942) and *Twenty-one Years of University Education for Social Service, 1920-41* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1941); Gordon Hamilton, "Planning for the Future in Schools of Social Work," *Social Service Review*, XVIII (June, 1944), 145-51.

<sup>15</sup> Franz Alexander, *Our Age of Unreason* (New York: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1942).

<sup>16</sup> Hamilton, "Planning for the Future in Schools of Social Work," *op. cit.*, p. 149.



meeting the educational needs of handicapped children in rural areas is by means of traveling teachers and by the appointment of special supervisors to give assistance and guidance to the local teachers. Still another possibility, used successfully in some states, is that of foster-home placement in urban centers where special facilities are maintained.

While the obligation of providing educational opportunities for the handicapped child rests with the local community, the state should share in the program by taking a position of leadership, by offering consultation services on such matters as curriculum and qualifications of teachers, and by helping to meet the excess costs of the specialized educational programs. Only when local resources are not available or when handicapped children fail to make an adjustment in a special class while living in their own home or foster-home should placement of the child in a residential school be considered.

Illinois, like most states, first approached the problem of educating handicapped children by providing a state residential school for certain handicapped children, specifically the deaf, the blind, the feeble-minded, and the delinquent. This plan seemed most feasible at a time when there were few such children and these few were scattered throughout the state. In time, however, as the state became more populous and the number of handicapped children began to increase, there developed the philosophy that the majority of handicapped children should be educated in day schools as close to their own communities as possible, in order to enable them to remain in their own homes, where family contacts could be maintained and where daily association with normal children would be possible. The

adjustment to community life of children who had grown up in a family, it was found, was much better than that of children subjected to a long period of institutionalization.

To encourage local school districts to establish special classes for the so-called exceptional children, Illinois, along with some twenty other states, had by 1945 enacted legislation providing for state aid to meet the excess cost of educating at least one of the several types of handicapped children in the public schools.<sup>2</sup> Because the cost of educating such children is considerably more than that of normal children, not only because expensive equipment and supplies frequently are necessary but also because specially trained teachers are essential, it is becoming a generally accepted conviction that the state should contribute toward the expenditures that are incurred.

The history of Illinois legislation designed to encourage local school districts to provide special educational opportunities for handicapped children and the extent to which this enabling legislation has been utilized is briefly reviewed in the subsequent sections. As will be evident, the approach has been piecemeal, first one group and then another being singled out for special services. Administration of these laws has also been far from uniform. Not until 1945 were the several laws pertaining to the special education of handicapped chil-

<sup>2</sup> California, Connecticut, Florida, Indiana, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Texas, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin, and Wyoming. See Elise H. Martens, *State Supervisory Programs for the Education of Exceptional Children* (U.S. Office of Education Bulletin 1940, No. 6) (Washington, 1942), pp. 8-9, and "State Legislation for Exceptional Children," *School Life*, XXVII (November, 1945), 3-6.

dren consolidated into a single act and administrative authority vested entirely in the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Prior to that time the Department of Public Welfare had also been assigned certain duties.

#### THE DEAF AND THE HARD-OF-HEARING

The first group of handicapped children to whom Illinois extended special educational opportunities were the deaf, for whom a residential school was founded in 1839.<sup>3</sup> From 1846, when the school was actually opened, until 1875 this school was the only one in the state which had facilities for the education of deaf children. In the latter year the Board of Education of Chicago opened a day class for deaf children and thus achieved the honor of being one of the first cities to do so.<sup>4</sup> Other classes were established in Chicago after 1879, when the General Assembly began periodically to appropriate varying amounts to the Chicago Board of Education for the support of these classes, which were to be open to deaf children of school age from any part of the state.<sup>5</sup>

As the success of the day classes in Chicago became known, parents in other communities desired similar opportunities for their deaf children; and in 1897,

<sup>3</sup> *Laws of Illinois*, 1838-39, p. 162.

<sup>4</sup> *American Annals of the Deaf*, LXX (January, 1925), 13.

<sup>5</sup> In 1879 the General Assembly appropriated \$15,000 from the state treasury "as a donation for the benefit of and to be used in the support and maintenance of the School for the Education of Deaf and Dumb Children, located in Chicago, and now under the management and control of the Board of Education of Chicago." This amount was reduced to \$5,000 in 1881. After 1883, when the sum of \$5,000 was appropriated, no further aid was given until 1897, when a general act, empowering school districts managed by boards of education or directors to establish and maintain classes for the deaf in public schools, authorized payment for such classes from the common school fund (*Laws of Illinois*, 1879, p. 20; *ibid.*, 1881, p. 28; *ibid.*, 1883, p. 11).

in response to a petition of a group of parents, the General Assembly enacted a law enabling local school districts to maintain classes for the instruction of the deaf if there were at least three students between the ages of three and twenty-one years in attendance.<sup>6</sup> State aid in the amount of \$150 for each pupil who was instructed in the class nine months of the school year was provided. This money was to be paid out of the common school fund. To insure the appointment of properly trained teachers, the act specified that the Superintendent of Public Instruction, who was vested with the right of making all such appointments upon the application of the local school district, was to appoint only persons who had obtained a teacher's certificate as provided by law and who had had special preparation in the teaching of the deaf for a term of not less than a year. The important question of state supervision was ignored, except that the Superintendent of Public Instruction was authorized to get annual reports and such facts concerning classes for the deaf as he might require.

This law apparently was looked upon by local public school districts as an infringement of their autonomy, for it was repealed eight years later (1905).<sup>7</sup> The law which took its place made no provision for state financial assistance or for state supervision, although it did maintain the same standards of teacher-training. State aid was reintroduced in 1911,<sup>8</sup> but effective state supervision did

<sup>6</sup> *Laws of Illinois*, 1897, p. 290. This law as well as those of 1905 and 1911 did not cover all local school districts, including only those controlled by boards of education or school directors. Since 1923, boards of school inspectors, whether acting under general law or under a special charter, have also been empowered to establish and maintain special classes for the deaf (*Laws of Illinois*, 1923, p. 611).

<sup>7</sup> *Laws of Illinois*, 1905, p. 373.

<sup>8</sup> *Laws of Illinois*, 1911, p. 502.



not come until about thirty years later. Instead of a lump-sum grant from the common school fund, the law of 1911 made provision for the payment from the state treasury of an amount not exceeding \$110 a year per child for the excess cost of operating a special class for deaf children. This amount was increased to \$225 in 1941,<sup>9</sup> when for the first time the hard-of-hearing were specifically included, and to \$300 in 1945,<sup>10</sup> when deaf children and those with defective hearing were included within the definition of "physically handicapped children" instead of being classed as a separate group.

Beginning in 1911, when state aid was reinstituted, state supervisory responsibility over classes for the deaf was divided between two state authorities, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the welfare department. Supervision of the educational aspects of the classes was vested in the Superintendent of Public Instruction, while the checking of claims for reimbursement was assigned to the welfare authority, where this responsibility rested until 1945, when responsibility for all phases of the program of special education was centralized in the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

The eligibility of pupils for admission to special classes for the deaf and hard-of-hearing has changed but slightly since the first law was passed in 1897. The age limits are still three to twenty-one years, but since 1941 the law has specified that such children must be of sound mind. There is no limit on the minimum number of children who must form a class in order to assure the school district's receiving state aid. To enable children to

benefit from classes established in school districts other than their own, the law has since 1929 permitted the payment of tuition and transportation costs.

Although legal provisions permitting local school districts to establish and maintain special educational facilities for children with defective hearing have been on the statute-books for almost half a century, relatively few communities outside of Chicago have taken advantage of these provisions. For example, during the school year 1939-40, the year for which comparable statistics with other states are available, only six cities<sup>11</sup> in the state reported having special facilities for educating deaf or hard-of-hearing children. Of the 763 children attending these classes, 704, or 93 per cent, were in Chicago.

That a great many more children with hearing defects need special educational services is revealed by the findings of a hearing-test project conducted by the Works Projects Administration in the late 1930's. By 1940 approximately 389,000 children had been given tests, of whom 224,000 lived outside Chicago. Almost 7 per cent of these children were found to have hearing defects, including 1.6 per cent with defects sufficiently serious to require attention, both medically and educationally.<sup>12</sup> On the basis of these findings, it has been estimated that there are at least 12,000 children in the state who should be receiving the benefits of a modified educational program which should include individual hearing

<sup>11</sup> Chicago (704), Joliet (9), Moline (11), Peoria (7), Rockford (22), and Winnetka (10). See Elise H. Martens and Emery M. Foster, *Statistics of Special Schools and Classes for Exceptional Children* (U.S. Office of Education, Biennial Survey of Education in the United States, 1938-40) (Washington, 1942), pp. 28-41.

<sup>12</sup> Lawrence Linck, "Physically Handicapped Children in Illinois," *Educational Press Bulletin*, May, 1941, p. 3.

<sup>9</sup> *Laws of Illinois 1941*, p. 1167.

<sup>10</sup> *Illinois Revised Statutes, 1945* (State Bar Association ed.), chap. 122, sec. 12-26.

aids and supplementary help in lip-reading.<sup>13</sup>

Although, prior to 1940, classes for deaf and hard-of-hearing children had not developed so rapidly as might be desired, compared with twenty-nine other states which by 1940 had established such classes, Illinois stands very near the top. That year it ranked fifth in the number of pupils who were enrolled in special classes conducted by the public schools. Only California, Indiana, Massachusetts, and New York reported a larger number of pupils attending day classes, Massachusetts taking the lead with 2,038.<sup>14</sup>

Since 1940 Illinois has made a little more progress in providing special classes for children with defective hearing, especially since 1941, when the maximum reimbursement was increased to \$225 a year. State reports indicate that during the school year 1944-45 some fifteen Illinois cities were providing special educational advantages to 769 deaf and hard-of-hearing pupils, of whom 80 per cent were in Chicago.<sup>15</sup> With the leadership which is now being given by the director of education of exceptional children in the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and with the max-

imum reimbursement increased to \$300, further expansion in these classes can be anticipated. The state director is co-operating with the Illinois Commission for Handicapped Children, the Division of Services for Crippled Children, and the Chicago Society for the Hard of Hearing in pointing out to parents and to school boards the advantages of special classes for children whose hearing is so impaired that it is impossible for them to benefit from the normal classroom program without special help.

#### THE BLIND AND VISUALLY HANDICAPPED

The second group of handicapped children for whom special educational facilities were extended by the state of Illinois were the blind. Like the majority of other states, Illinois organized its first program for the education and training of the blind around a state residential school, which was incorporated in 1849.<sup>16</sup> Up until 1900, the Illinois School for the Blind was the only school in the state which provided a free education for visually handicapped children. The idea of conducting day classes for the blind which would make possible their association with sighted persons had been suggested by Samuel Gridley Howe, the pioneer educator of the blind in the United States, as early as 1872, but it was not until twenty-two years later that a special class in a public school actually was established. To Chicago belongs the honor of taking the initial step in 1900.<sup>17</sup> So successful was the experiment that by 1922 some forty-four cities in twelve states had established similar classes.<sup>18</sup>

To help the Chicago Board of Education (as well as other school districts which might initiate special classes for

<sup>13</sup> The estimate of 12,000 corresponds closely with the estimate of 11,594 by the Superintendent of Public Instruction who in 1940 conducted a limited survey of the various types of exceptional children in the state who needed special educational facilities (Graham, *op. cit.*, p. 10).

<sup>14</sup> Martens and Foster, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

<sup>15</sup> Unpublished data supplied by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The nine cities which had established special classes for deaf and hard-of-hearing children since 1940 were: Aurora (which had had classes previously), Campaign, Chicago Heights, Elgin, Elmhurst, Evanston, Ottawa, River Forest, and Waukegan. The relatively small increase in the number of children receiving special instruction is due to the fact that Chicago was providing special service for a hundred children less in 1944-45 than it has been in 1939-40.

<sup>16</sup> *Laws of Illinois*, 1849, p. 39.

<sup>17</sup> "Blind," *Encyclopaedia Americana*, IV, 83.

<sup>18</sup> Martens and Foster, *op. cit.*, p. 7.



the education of the blind and partially seeing) defray the expense of maintaining special classes for the visually defective, a law was passed by the General Assembly in 1911 providing state support of these classes in an amount not to exceed \$160 a year per child.<sup>19</sup> Supervision of the classes was vested in the Superintendent of Public Instruction. While this law was a step in the right direction, it was defective in that it was not applicable to all school districts and that it set no qualifications for teachers' training. The first defect was corrected in 1923, when legislation was passed extending to all school districts the right to establish Braille or sight-saving classes;<sup>20</sup> while the second was corrected in 1929, when the law was amended to provide that only specially trained teachers were to be employed.<sup>21</sup> Another improvement in the law of 1929 was that the maximum grant for the excess cost of providing special classes for the blind and visually handicapped was increased to \$250 a year per child. This amount went up to \$300 in 1945, when a uniform rate of repayment was adopted for all types of physically handicapped children.<sup>22</sup>

Interestingly enough, legislation permitting local school districts to set up Braille and sight-saving classes originally set no limits on the ages of the children who could be admitted to such classes. Not until 1929 did the law state that the classes were to be established for the benefit of children between the ages of three and twenty-one, and not until 1941

did it provide that they had to be of sound mind.<sup>23</sup> Unlike early statutory provisions relating to the special education of deaf children in the public schools, no limitation was ever set on the number of visually defective children who had to be in attendance in order to qualify the local school district for state reimbursement.

Supervisory responsibility for Braille and sight-saving classes, like those for the deaf and hard-of-hearing, was divided between the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Department of Public Welfare, the former being charged with the supervision of the educational aspects of the local programs and the latter being made responsible for financial matters. This division in responsibility was finally eliminated in 1945, when the various laws pertaining to the education of all types of exceptional children were brought together into a single law and administrative responsibility was centered in the Superintendent of Public Instruction.<sup>24</sup>

Despite the existence since 1911 of legislation extending state aid to local public schools for the special education of blind and visually defective children living in their communities, little use was made of this aid prior to 1929. At that time, only the city of Chicago was regularly participating in the state grant-in-aid program.

After 1929, however, owing largely to the efforts of the Illinois Society for the Prevention of Blindness, which began to conduct sight-saving surveys in down-state areas, special classes for the partially sighted began to spring up in various parts of the state. As a result, at the end of the school year 1939-40

<sup>19</sup> *Laws of Illinois*, 1911, p. 502.

<sup>20</sup> *Laws of Illinois*, 1923, p. 611. This law included school districts under the management of school inspectors in addition to those managed by boards of directors and boards of education.

<sup>21</sup> *Laws of Illinois*, 1929, p. 735.

<sup>22</sup> *Illinois Revised Statutes*, 1945, chap. 122, sec. 12-26.

<sup>23</sup> *Laws of Illinois*, 1941, p. 1167.

<sup>24</sup> *Illinois Revised Statutes*, 1945, chap. 122, secs. 12-20 to 12-30.

there were twenty-five Illinois cities and towns maintaining sight-saving classes. Well over half the approximately 1,000 children enrolled in such classes were attending schools outside Chicago.<sup>25</sup>

That other visually handicapped children could profit from a modified school program is indicated by the findings of the W.P.A. eye-testing project, which was carried on under the supervision of the Illinois Society for the Prevention of Blindness. During the school year 1939-40 some 330,000 school children were given eye tests. Of this number, a tenth were found to have defective vision, including approximately 2,700 with serious eye defects.<sup>26</sup> It is this latter group that is generally considered as needing sight-saving class instruction and for whom special facilities should be provided but whose disabilities were not receiving any special consideration.

It should, however, be pointed out that Illinois is far ahead of most states in this field of endeavor. During the school year 1939-40, when sight-saving classes were in operation in twenty-eight states, only two—New York and Ohio—had a larger number of blind and partially seeing children enrolled in public-school classes.<sup>27</sup> Since 1940, sight-saving classes have been established in ten more cities, so that by June, 1945, there were eighty-

<sup>25</sup> Alton (15), Aurora (11), Bloomington (21), Blue Island (10), Champaign (10), Chicago (573), Cicero (11), Danville (13), Decatur (13), Elgin (15), Evanston (15), Freeport (10), Galesburg (15), Joliet (21), LaGrange (10), LaSalle (14), Mattoon (15), Oak Park (14), Peoria (24), Quincy (16), Rock Island (20), Rockford (23), Springfield (13), Villa Park (29), and Waukegan (13) (Martens and Foster, *op. cit.*, pp. 28-41).

<sup>26</sup> Following the survey, a plan of correction was worked out by the Illinois Society for the Prevention of Blindness, and 13,484 pairs of eyes were given the correction they needed (see *Annual Report of the Illinois Society for the Prevention of Blindness, 1939-40*, pp. 7-8).

<sup>27</sup> Martens and Foster, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

six classes in thirty-five cities.<sup>28</sup> But all seventeen of these classes were in elementary schools, which means that visually handicapped adolescents who go on to high school either have to adapt themselves to the program which is designed for seeing pupils or have to enter the sight-saving class for high-school students at the Illinois School for the Blind.

The position of leadership which Illinois holds in this field can be largely attributed to the efforts of the Illinois Society for the Prevention of Blindness, which enlists the interest of parents and school boards in the establishment of sight-conservation classes and has been successful in obtaining increased appropriations from the General Assembly for this purpose. It is at present working closely with the director of exceptional children in the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, so that even greater advances can be expected in the future.

#### CRIPPLED CHILDREN

Unlike the education of deaf and blind children in Illinois, special facilities for the education of crippled children began in a day school rather than in an institution.<sup>29</sup> The honor of providing the first

<sup>28</sup> The ten additional cities to which the state was making payments for the excess cost of educating children with defective vision included: Centralia, Chicago Heights, East Peoria, Elmhurst, Harrisburg, Mount Vernon, Murphysboro, Ottawa, Sterling, and West Frankfort. Unpublished data compiled by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

<sup>29</sup> Since 1930 the state has maintained the Illinois Surgical Institute for Children, which is located in Chicago. This is primarily a hospital for the surgical care of indigent crippled children under sixteen years of age, although educational classes and bedside teachers are provided by the Board of Education of Chicago. A pioneering venture upon which Illinois has embarked is the Hospital School for Severely Physically Handicapped Children, which was established by the General Assembly in 1945. This hospital school, which opened in May, 1946,



special day class for crippled children, who because of their handicaps could not attend regular school, again goes to Chicago, where a group of forty-five pupils were brought together in 1899 and were taught in a rented building. These accommodations were used until September, 1907, when the Jesse Spalding School, the first school especially designed to accommodate crippled children, was opened.<sup>30</sup> Since that time three other schools for crippled children have been established by the Chicago Board of Education.

The history of legislation for the special education of crippled children by the public schools parallels most closely that of the deaf. Four years after the Board of Education of Chicago had pioneered in providing special educational facilities for children so orthopedically handicapped that they could not readily be taken care of in the regular classroom, state aid was made available to it. In 1903<sup>31</sup> the General Assembly passed an act which authorized the payment of \$150 per pupil from the common school fund to school districts managed by boards of education or directors. Such classes, however, had to have an attendance of at least fifteen pupils.

This law gave the Superintendent of Public Instruction considerable authority, but, like the law of 1897 relative to the education of the deaf in day schools, after which it was patterned, it was re-

pealed in 1905.<sup>32</sup> Substituted for it was a law leaving to school districts complete responsibility for financing special educational services for crippled children.

The Chicago Board of Education continued to operate its special schools without state aid until 1923, when legislation was passed providing for the payment from the state treasury of the excess cost of operating special classes for crippled children. The maximum amount of reimbursement was not to exceed \$300 a year per pupil.<sup>33</sup>

Children for whom these special educational facilities could be provided were defined as those between the ages of five and twenty-one years so deformed in body or limb that they could not profitably or safely be educated in regular classes. A proviso was added to the effect that children with defective hearing, speech, or sight were not to be considered within the meaning of the act.

Following the passage of this act, the Chicago Board of Education began to claim state reimbursement not only for crippled children but also for those with heart disease for whom it was providing special educational services. This practice had to be discontinued after 1933, when the attorney-general ruled that children suffering from deformed heart valves could not, according to the definition given in the law, be considered crippled children.<sup>34</sup> Not until 1943, when the definition of a physically handicapped child was broadened, did state aid for the special education of this type of child become available.<sup>35</sup> In 1943, also, provision was made for the payment of transportation of physically

is designed for mentally alert children under twenty-one years of age who are so severely incapacitated physically that they cannot be cared for in their own homes. It is the first of its kind to be established by any state.

<sup>30</sup> See Edith Reeves Solenberger, *Public School Classes for Crippled Children* (U.S. Bureau of Education Bulletin 1918, No. 10) (Washington, 1918), p. 9.

<sup>31</sup> *Laws of Illinois*, 1903, p. 34.

<sup>32</sup> *Laws of Illinois*, 1905, p. 372.

<sup>33</sup> *Laws of Illinois*, 1923, p. 597.

<sup>34</sup> *Opinions of the Attorney General*, 1933, p. 631.

<sup>35</sup> *Laws of Illinois*, 1943, p. 1277.



handicapped children from one district to another.

When the state contributes to the excess cost of educating handicapped children, it should be assured that the money which it appropriates for that purpose is spent wisely and for the benefit of the children for whom it is intended. Because past experience had shown that certain school districts, merely to claim state aid, had been tempted to put into special classes only slightly handicapped children who should properly have taken their places in a regular classroom, it became obvious that some method of determining the medical eligibility of each child prior to enrolment for special educational services should be provided. In 1943, therefore, there was written into the law a provision to the effect that the Division of Services for Crippled Children (the one state agency which maintains diagnostic clinics easily accessible to all parts of the state) is to determine the nature and degree of a child's handicap and whether it is serious enough to warrant a program of special education. This check on the eligibility of physically handicapped children prior to enrolment in a special class not only assures the local school districts the right to claim reimbursement but also gives the Division of Services for Crippled Children an opportunity to discover children whose handicaps can be corrected.

As in the case of classes for the deaf, blind, and partially seeing, state supervision over day classes for the crippled was not centralized in a single state authority until 1945. The law of 1903, which for the first time provided for the special education of crippled children, gave the state Superintendent of Public Instruction certain powers. He was to appoint the teachers for the classes and could also remove them for cause. His

right to visit and inspect such classes was not specifically mentioned, but there was a mandatory provision requiring school districts maintaining special facilities for the crippled to report to him annually. Probably because state aid at this time was in the form of a lump-sum grant from the state common school fund, which was distributed by the county superintendent of schools, the state superintendent was intrusted with no responsibility in this area.

Following the repeal of this act in 1905, state supervision over these classes was not reintroduced until 1923. At this time the educational aspects of these classes became subject to the supervision of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, but approval of claims for state aid became the responsibility of the Department of Public Welfare. These two state agencies shared supervisory responsibility until 1945, when the Superintendent of Public Instruction was given entire responsibility for all phases of the program.

Since the passage of the 1923 act making regular state aid available to the local school districts for the special education of crippled children, facilities for them have developed to a greater extent than those with defects of the ear and eye. This may be attributed in part to the special appeal which these children have on human sympathy and in part to the possibility of providing special educational provisions by means of home teachers or transportation, as well as by special classes or special teachers in combination with the regular school program.

The number of children benefiting from the provisions of the law is found in the statistics published by the United States Office of Education. During the school year 1939-40, classes for 4,252

crippled children were being conducted by public schools in forty-five Illinois cities and towns.<sup>36</sup> Of the total number enrolled, however, approximately 90 per cent were in classes and schools conducted by the Board of Education of Chicago. That year Chicago had the largest enrolment of physically handicapped children in special classes of any city in the nation. For that reason perhaps the state outranked most of the others. Only New York, with an enrolment of 4,785, surpassed Illinois.<sup>37</sup>

The progress which Illinois has made in this field of endeavor is one of which it can be justly proud, but much yet remains to be done in bringing educational opportunities to crippled children in the rural areas.

#### OTHER PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED

Until 1943 the three preceding groups of physically handicapped children—the blind and visually defective, the deaf and hard-of-hearing, and the crippled—were the only ones for whom state aid was provided to facilitate their education in special day schools and classes in their own communities. That does not mean that some local school districts did not recognize the social and economic importance of providing special educational facilities for other types of physically

handicapped children, including those with a heart ailment, a speech defect, or a seriously underweight condition. The Board of Education of Chicago, for example, extended special educational services to all these children and paid for such services entirely out of local funds. At least five other Illinois cities—Galesburg, Moline, Peoria, Rockford, and Springfield—also modified their school programs to improve the instruction of one or more of the foregoing groups of physically handicapped children. But facilities in terms of need have been woefully lacking. The number of cardiac children requiring some special educational services is estimated to be somewhere between 20,000 and 25,000, yet only a handful are being provided with the help they need.<sup>38</sup> The number of those with defective speech is estimated to be well over 15,000, while those with lowered vitality—the anemic and pre-tubercular—number close to 13,000. Yet as recently as 1943 only Chicago was providing special educational facilities for such handicapped children.<sup>39</sup>

The inequality of providing state aid for the establishment of special educational opportunities for only certain types of handicapped children was commented upon by the Committee on Child Welfare Legislation in its report of 1931.<sup>40</sup> Little, however, was done to promote legislation that would extend the benefits of special educational services to all types of physically handicapped children by means of state aid until 1943, when the Illinois Commission for Handicapped Children sponsored a bill extending special educational serv-

<sup>36</sup> Arlington Heights (2), Aurora (23), Batavia (1), Bloomington (7), Blue Island (2), Bradley (2), Canton (1), Centralia (6), Champaign ( ), Chester (1), Chicago (3,898), Danville (8), Decatur (18), East Peoria (3), East St. Louis (15), Elgin (19), Elmhurst (1), Evanston (22), Galesburg (7), Granite City (4), Harrisburg (8), Havana (3), Jacksonville (5), Joliet (11), Kankakee (2), Lincoln (2), Lombard (3), Macomb (3), Moline (2), Monticello (2), Mount Vernon (8), Naperville (1), Pekin (1), Peoria (5), P. ntia (1), Quincy (14), Rock Island (11), Rockford (44), Shelbyville (1), Springfield (21), Sterling (2), Streator (2), Urbana (4), Vird n (2), and Wilmette (1) (Martens and Foster, *op. cit.*, pp. 28-41).

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>38</sup> Linck, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

<sup>39</sup> Graham, *op. cit.*, pp. 9-10.

<sup>40</sup> *Report of the Committee on Child Welfare Legislation, State of Illinois, February 3, 1931*, pp. 34-35.



ices to other than orthopedically handicapped pupils. This bill, on which the General Assembly took favorable action, amended the crippled children's act of 1923 in several important respects. Provision was made for the payment of excess cost of educating physically handicapped children, exclusive of the blind, defective of vision, deaf and hard-of-hearing (who were provided for in another statute) up to the maximum of \$300 a month, and for the payment of transportation if necessary. New provisions requiring approval of existing and future special classes and certification of medical eligibility of the child made possible improved administration.

Further extension of services to physically handicapped children became possible in 1945, when the definition of a physically handicapped child was broadened to include children as young as three years of age.

The stimulating effect this new legislation has had on local school districts is reflected in the increased number of communities which are providing special instruction for children who, because of some physical impediment, cannot derive the fullest amount of benefit from the regular classroom program. State reports indicate that, during the school year 1944-45, 173 communities in 71 counties had provided special educational opportunities to 12,765 physically handicapped children, including the crippled.<sup>41</sup> Over half of these children (55 per cent) were being given help in the correction of a speech defect. Interest in

providing these children with aid in overcoming their handicap was stimulated by the speech rehabilitation program inaugurated late in 1943 by the Division of Services for Crippled Children. Since 1943 at least eighteen public schools outside Chicago have established such classes, eleven tracing their origin to the stimulation and guidance of this division.<sup>42</sup>

Other types of handicapped children are also receiving attention, and more will get special services as local communities become aware of the benefits of the individualized programs. The establishment of "centers" where children needing special instruction from several near-by schools could be sent is a proposal which has been suggested by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction for the use of small school districts.<sup>43</sup>

Although Illinois still has a long way to go in meeting the special educational needs of all physically handicapped children, it is making progress and, in comparison with other states, is well ahead of most of them.

#### THE SOCIALLY MALADJUSTED

Special educational facilities and services for socially maladjusted children is a recent addition to the public school program. So recent has the movement been that by 1940 there were but fifty cities in twenty-five states that had established special classes or schools for problem children as a part of the public school system.<sup>44</sup> While some children who disrupt the classroom routine by their truancy, misbehavior, or incorrigibility can be helped to make a satis-

<sup>41</sup> Of these 173 communities, 136 provided special educational services for fewer than 5 children and only 20 for as many as 25 children. In the latter group was Chicago, in which 8,999, or 70 per cent of the total physically handicapped children, were getting special instruction. Data furnished by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

<sup>42</sup> "Progress in Care of Crippled Children Highlights Past Year's Activities," *Welfare Bulletin*, XXXV (October, 1944), 9.

<sup>43</sup> Graham, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

<sup>44</sup> Martens and Foster, *op. cit.*, p. 8.



factory adjustment by an understanding teacher who adapts her program of work to meet the needs of a troublesome child, there are others who fail to respond to such treatment and who need the facilities of special classes or schools.

A study of the provisions for the special education of the socially handicapped child in the public schools of Illinois reveals that special facilities for the care of such children exist in only a few of the larger cities, notably Chicago. That city has set up two types of special educational programs for the treatment of children presenting behavior problems: (1) a residential school known as the parental school and (2) special classes in a few of the regular public schools and two special day schools.

These methods of dealing with truant and unruly children came into use only after the compulsory education law, which was first passed in 1883,<sup>45</sup> forced the Board of Education of Chicago to consider other means than expulsion of handling troublesome children. The possibility of using ungraded rooms was considered, but the parental school was tried first, especially after a special commission authorized by the City Council in 1899 recommended the "establishment of one or more parental schools for the forcible detention of persistently refractory pupils."<sup>46</sup> In compliance with this recommendation the legislature of 1899 passed the parental school law, which provided that cities having a population of 100,000 or more must establish "one or more parental or truant schools for the purpose of affording a

place of confinement, discipline, instruction and maintenance for children of compulsory school age who may be committed thereto."<sup>47</sup> Not only truant children but those who were serious behavior problems in school could be committed to the parental school on court order. This school, which was opened in January, 1902, admitted only boys until 1919, at which time also girls were granted admission, following the building of a special cottage for their care. Their numbers, however, have always been much lower than that of the boys.

Because it was recognized that the Chicago Parental School could not possibly take care of all the problem boys in the public schools and because some school officials were of the opinion that even the most serious behavior cases should be given a trial in a special class before being subjected to the undesirable experience of a court appearance, it was decided to establish special rooms for truant and persistently troublesome children. Such classes, which emphasized industrial rather than academic training, were first set up in 1911.

In the same year the General Assembly passed a law authorizing boards of education to establish classes and schools for delinquent children and providing for the payment from the state treasury of the excess cost of maintaining such classes or schools.<sup>48</sup> The maximum amount of reimbursement was set at \$190 a year per pupil, which maximum has never been changed.

Following the passage of this law, a number of special classes in various sec-

<sup>45</sup> *Laws of Illinois*, 1883, p. 167.

<sup>46</sup> *Report of Educational Commission of City of Chicago*, 1899, p. 160. Quoted in Edith Abbott and Sophonisba P. Breckinridge, *Truancy and Non-attendance in the Chicago Schools* (Chicago, 1917), p. 86.

<sup>47</sup> *Laws of Illinois*, 1899, p. 346. The population limit meant that the law was applicable only to the city of Chicago. However, cities of over 25,000 could also establish such schools, provided the question was submitted to a vote of the people and adopted by a majority of them.

<sup>48</sup> *Laws of Illinois*, 1911, p. 505.

tions of Chicago were organized. As was to be expected, boys placed in the special classes varied in age, in intellectual ability, and in grade attainment, as well as in social experience. As a result there was little possibility for homogeneous grouping. Moreover, the teachers had little information about the home life of the boy, his neighborhood environment, or the influence companions had upon him.

In order to facilitate individual study of the boy by specialists, including a physician, a psychiatrist, a psychologist, and a social worker, as well as to make possible proper classification of the boys and a more varied vocational program, it was decided to centralize the so-called truant rooms located in regular schools on the North and West sides into the Montifiore School. This school, which was established in September, 1929, proved so successful that a second school, the Mosely, was opened a year later to serve the area south of the Loop.

Although both educators and social workers have questioned the advisability of segregating problem boys, the experience of these schools, which annually care for more than a thousand boys, would seem to indicate that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages.

Outside of Chicago little progress has been made in establishing special classes for children, even after 1941, when the law was amended to make state aid available to "truant, incorrigible and delinquent" pupils assigned to special classes or schools by transfer as well as by court commitment.<sup>49</sup> Cities other than Chicago which in 1944 were offering special educational opportunities to socially handicapped children numbered seven, with an average attendance of 114.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>49</sup> *Laws of Illinois, 1941*, p. 1142.

While Illinois, in comparison with other states, has made some headway in providing special educational services for behavior problem children, especially in Chicago, it has yet to devise methods of meeting the needs of such children in the smaller cities and rural districts.

#### THE MENTALLY DEFECTIVE

The history of the education of the mentally defective child in Illinois follows closely the pattern of most of the states of the nation. The first step in that direction was the establishment of a residential school which originally was attached to the School for the Deaf as an experimental unit.<sup>51</sup> Not until six years later, in 1871, was a separate institution for this group of handicapped children established.<sup>52</sup> Originally this school did not accept children who were hopelessly uneducable, but, as applications for the admission of those in need of constant care and supervision continued to grow, a custodial building was finally opened in 1891; and since that time intake has been extended to adults as well as to children.

While in the 1890's and early 1900's segregation of the mentally defective was looked upon as a possible solution of caring for this group of handicapped children, it is now recognized that institutional care of all types of mentally handicapped children is neither practicable nor desirable. Of the educable group only those who are socially inadequate or whose home conditions are detrimental to their proper training should be sent to the state schools. However, of the estimated 70,000 educable mentally handi-

<sup>50</sup> Chicago Heights (25), Galesburg (56), Joliet (12), Oswego (1), Peoria (13), Polo (4), and Quincy (13) (Superintendent of Public Instruction, *Annual Statistical Report, 1944*, p. 394).

<sup>51</sup> *Laws of Illinois, 1865*, p. 78.

<sup>52</sup> *Laws of Illinois, 1871*, p. 417.



capped children of school age in Illinois,<sup>53</sup> relatively a small percentage are receiving special instruction.

That the mentally handicapped child can be given instruction adapted to his individual needs, interests, and abilities and helped to take a constructive part in our economic and social life was taken cognizance of by the Chicago Board of Education as early as 1891. While Chicago cannot claim the honor of being the first city to inaugurate day classes for the instruction of mentally subnormal children, it can claim the distinction of being the first city in the world to establish a child study department within the public school system where the child's particular difficulty could be diagnosed and a plan of treatment suggested.

The experimental classes which were first tried out in 1891 soon turned out to be the place where any child who, for one reason or another, failed to succeed in the regular classroom was transferred. Although these early classes did not prove to be the solution for meeting the needs of the mentally deficient, they served the purpose of demonstrating the need of diagnostic services. With the establishment of a child study department in the Chicago public school system in 1899, it was possible to select on a more scientific basis those children whose difficulties were due to intellectual inferiority. The first special class limited solely to mentally handicapped children was established in Chicago in 1900. Since that time school facilities for mentally defective children in the Chicago public schools have developed along various lines. At the present time classes are provided for children under twelve years of age whose I.Q. is between 50 and 75.

<sup>53</sup> Illinois Commission for Handicapped Children, *The Educable Mentally Handicapped Child* (1943), p. 15.

Those over the age of twelve years with an I.Q. over 70 are absorbed back into the elementary grades whenever that seems desirable. The remainder are transferred to vocational centers which have as their objectives: "(1) the development of manual skills; (2) teaching the basic academic skills; (3) cultivating desirable uses of leisure time; (4) training for economic self-sufficiency."<sup>54</sup> At the age of sixteen these children may transfer to the advanced vocational centers, or they may leave school to go to work.

Although public schools outside the city of Chicago in some instances offer special educational services to mentally handicapped children, these are comparatively few in number and are to be found only in the larger cities and towns. In as recent a school year as 1939-40, a period from which comparable statistics from other states are available, there were but 4,252 mentally deficient children who were attending special classes in the public schools of twelve Illinois cities.<sup>55</sup>

Of this number, 3,716, or 87 per cent, were enrolled in the Chicago public schools. A comparison with forty-one other states which in the year 1939-40 were conducting special classes for mentally deficient children, showed that Illinois ranked ninth, being surpassed, in order of numerical importance, by New York, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Maryland, California, Michigan, Ohio, and New Jersey.<sup>56</sup> Undoubtedly, one reason why Illinois did not make a better

<sup>54</sup> Bernadine C. Schmidt, "Vocational Guidance for the Mentally Defective," *Chicago School Journal*, XXV (September-December, 1943), 28.

<sup>55</sup> Alton (19), Bloomington (35), Chicago (3,716), Cicero (38), Danville (71), East St. Louis (62), Elgin (17), Peoria (63), Rockford (203), Savanna (13), Sterling (6), and Wilmette (9) (Martens and Foster, *op. cit.*, pp. 28-41).

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.



showing at that time was that, unlike most of the foregoing states, it had no legislation providing state financial aid to local school districts to meet the excess cost of educating mentally handicapped children beyond that involved in educating normal children.

The wisdom of encouraging local districts to provide special educational facilities for children of limited mental abilities by means of state aid was pointed out by the Committee on Child Welfare Legislation in 1931, and it recommended that "the State appropriate a sum, not to exceed \$100 a year per child, for payment toward the cost of conducting special classes for mentally and socially handicapped children in which they live."<sup>57</sup>

Legislation in line with this recommendation was not enacted until twelve years later, when a bill sponsored by the Illinois Society of Consulting Psychologists and the Commission for Handicapped Children was acted upon favorably by the General Assembly.<sup>58</sup> It empowered local school districts to establish special schools, special classes, or special instruction within the regular classes for educable mentally handicapped children between the ages of five and twenty-one and provided for the payment by the state of the excess cost of such services up to \$100 a year per child. In order to qualify for reimbursement, it became mandatory upon local school districts to submit their plan for special education of mentally handicapped children to the Superintendent of Public Instruction for approval. The law vested this official with the general supervision of the special educational facilities

and with the power to make necessary rules for the carrying-out of the purpose of the act. He was also made responsible for determining the eligibility of children to receive special educational services. To assure proper selection of such children, the law provided for their examination by a "qualified psychological examiner,"<sup>59</sup> and to assure their instruction by competent teachers, the law specified that such persons had to hold a valid teacher's certificate and must have received "special instruction in methods of teaching the educable mentally handicapped as defined and approved by the Superintendent of Public Instruction."

The law of 1943, while outstanding as a piece of progressive legislation, was merely an enabling act. No appropriations for carrying out its provisions were made. Supporters of the legislation hoped that the new law would stimulate local school districts to provide special programs of education for this neglected group, or at least study their needs, thus enabling the Superintendent of Public Instruction to estimate as accurately as possible the amount of state funds that should be appropriated for the following biennium. An appropriation for this purpose was made by the General Assembly in 1945, and there is reason to hope that Illinois has embarked on a new era in educating and training the mentally handicapped child.

<sup>59</sup> A qualified psychological examiner was defined as "a person who has graduated with a master's or higher degree in psychology or educational psychology from a higher institution of learning which maintains equipment, course of study and standards of scholarship approved by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, who has had at least one year of full-time supervised experience in the individual psychological examination of children, of a character approved by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and who has such additional qualifications as may be required by the Superintendent of Public Instruction" (*ibid.*, sec. 6).

<sup>57</sup> *Report of the Committee on Child Welfare Legislation, State of Illinois, February 3, 1931*, pp. 37-38.

<sup>58</sup> *Laws of Illinois, 1943*, p. 1239.

#### STATE SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITY

As has already been indicated, responsibility for the administration of the laws allocating state funds for the education of handicapped children in the public schools was originally divided between two state authorities, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the welfare department. The duty assigned to the latter was that of approving claims of the school districts seeking reimbursement for the excess cost of providing special educational facilities for certain types of handicapped children. The supervisory service of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, on the other hand, was concerned primarily with educational matters, such as methods of instruction, courses of study, and teachers' qualifications.

This division of responsibility between the two state agencies resulted in confusion and in some duplication of effort. The first step toward the elimination of dual administration was taken in 1941, when the law pertaining to the special education of socially maladjusted children was amended, allocating to the Superintendent of Public Instruction responsibility for approving the claims of school districts for reimbursement as well as his former supervisory duties. The final step in the way of a unified program of administration was achieved in 1945, when the several laws pertaining to the education of exceptional children were consolidated into a single act and administration centralized in the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Although the several laws pertaining to the education of handicapped children in special classes all provided for state supervision on the part of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, very limited services were provided before 1941. This was so because prior to that

time the educational authority had neither the staff nor the funds for carrying out an effective program of supervision. A first assistant to the Superintendent of Public Instruction, whose official position was that of regional supervisor for elementary and secondary schools, spent some time visiting special classes, but he did not have the time to give them the attention they required. The need for increased guidance and assistance was recognized by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and in 1939 an appropriation of \$12,000 for the supervision of special classes was requested and was voted upon favorably by the General Assembly. Unfortunately, this appropriation was vetoed by the governor,<sup>60</sup> and it was not until two years later that funds for the appointment of a director of education of exceptional children became available. With the appointment of a director who gives full time to supervision of the various classes has come a recognition of the need for special supervisors. In 1945 the budget of the Superintendent of Public Instruction included funds for the payment of the salaries of specialists in the various fields of special education and for several qualified psychological examiners. Funds for this purpose were approved by the legislature, and with the appointment of this qualified personnel Illinois will have one of the best-supervised programs for the education of exceptional children in the country.

#### STATE APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE EDUCATION OF HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

Although legislation authorizing aid from the Illinois state treasury to local school districts which set up special facilities for the education of handicapped

<sup>60</sup> *Laws of Illinois, 1939, p. 191.*



children was first enacted in 1911, regular appropriations for this purpose did not begin until 1917. That year a sum of \$100,000 was made available for the education of deaf and blind children in special classes. The amount of the appropriation soon began to increase not only as funds for the payment of the excess cost of educating other groups of handicapped children gradually became available<sup>61</sup> but also as more school districts began taking advantage of the several enabling laws. By 1945 ap-

amount appropriated for the special education of all types of physically handicapped children jumps to approximately three-fourths. Note should also be made of the fact that the first appropriation for the special education of mentally handicapped children was made in 1945. This amount, approximately \$600,000, should bring new advantages to a much-neglected group. Table 1 also shows that about 70 per cent of the total appropriations for the excess cost of educating handicapped children in Illinois will go

TABLE 1\*  
STATE APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE EXCESS COST OF EDUCATING  
HANDICAPPED CHILDREN IN ILLINOIS, 1945-47

TYPE OF HANDICAPPED CHILD	STATE APPROPRIATIONS		
	Total	Chicago	Downstate
Physically handicapped . . . . .	\$2,594,304	\$1,950,000	\$ 644,304
Blind, defective vision . . . . .	450,700	225,000	225,700
Deaf, defective hearing . . . . .	421,850	301,500	120,350
Truant, incorrigible, delinquent . .	845,840	650,000	195,840
Educable mentally handicapped . .	598,000	350,000	248,000
Total . . . . .	\$4,910,694	\$3,476,500	\$1,434,194

\* Compiled from Department of Finance, *Summary of Appropriations, Regular Session, Sixty-fourth General Assembly*, pp. 27-28.

propriations had reached the \$5,000,000 mark. The amount of money allotted for the excess cost of educating the various types of handicapped children in Chicago and in the downstate areas for the biennium 1945-46 is shown in Table 1.

As an examination of this table shows, a little over half the total amount is to be used for the reimbursement of school districts which provide for physically handicapped children, exclusive of those with defective vision and hearing. If the latter two groups are added, then the

<sup>61</sup> E.g., funds for the payment of the excess costs of educating delinquent children became available in 1919, for the crippled in 1923, and for the mentally educable in 1945.

to the city of Chicago and indicates the need for expanding special educational facilities for handicapped children in downstate Illinois.

#### SUMMARY

The foregoing review of the legislative history of special educational services for handicapped children in the public schools of Illinois shows the gains that have been made in this field in the last fifty years. Instead of having four different laws on the subject, there is at present a single law. The types of exceptional children for whose benefit legislation has been enacted is no longer



limited to a selected few whose special cause happened to be championed by some interested group but includes all types of handicapped children. The ages of those eligible for care has in most instances been broadened, ranging from three to twenty-one years of age in the case of the physically handicapped and from five to twenty-one years in the case of the educable mentally handicapped. Legal provision also exists for determining the eligibility of physically and mentally handicapped children for special educational services, thus insuring expenditure of funds for the benefit of those children for whom they were intended.

State aid to help local districts meet the excess cost of educating exceptional children is now available for all types, although very few districts avail themselves of every state-aid provision. The maximum amount of reimbursement has also increased over the years, and the

several amounts are equal to and in some instances are above those provided by other states.

Significant strides have also been made in the matter of administration. A completely unified program was finally achieved in 1945, when the Superintendent of Public Instruction was assigned functions formerly given to the Department of Public Welfare. With the increase in responsibilities assigned to that office has come an increase in appropriations for administrative expenses, thus assuring the development of adequate supervisory services.

Illinois may well be proud of the progress it has made in extending special educational services to handicapped children in the state, but not until these special services are more widely established in downstate areas can it be said that children throughout the state are being offered equal opportunities.

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

## DESIRABLE QUALIFICATIONS FOR CHILD WELFARE WORK AS RECOMMENDED BY PUBLIC AND PRIVATE CHILD WELFARE AGENCIES

HAZEL H. FREDERICKSEN

THERE are now employed in the United States and its possessions about 12,600 child welfare workers. Of these, more than 3,600 are employed in public agencies providing services, other than institutional care, to children, and approximately 9,000 in private agencies and institutions. As many more are needed to fill existing vacancies. According to a United States Children's Bureau survey published in July, 1945, more than 50 per cent of all full-time children's workers employed in public welfare agencies were concentrated in eight states.

The need of personnel in the child welfare field has stimulated schools of social work to develop special sequences of courses and field work designed to prepare students for this particular area of practice. According to the American Association of Schools of Social Work, all the forty-five member-schools offer classroom courses in child welfare. Thirty-seven offer field work in child welfare; thirty-three of the thirty-seven offer three or more courses in child welfare, indicating thereby that they have a specialized curriculum in the subject. The latest figures available from all the schools in the academic year 1943-44 show that 1,080 students received a degree and 1,042 received diplomas or certificates. In addition, 336 satisfied all the degree requirements except the completion of a thesis and/or the examination. It is impossible to check accurately the number of these gradu-

ates who are now employed as child welfare workers. However, it is known that a number of them have completed two years of graduate training and that others have at least one year of training in one of the forty-five recognized schools.

Current salary quotations in private child welfare agencies show that school of social work graduates with or without experience have a salary range of \$1,500 to \$2,400 with a median of \$1,865. The median rate for all full-time child welfare workers in public agencies, according to a United States Children's Bureau survey, July 31, 1944, was \$1,985. In the public field the median salary quotation for urban workers was \$2,101, or 10 per cent higher than the median for workers in rural areas.

There is little utilization of Negro workers on child welfare staffs. A survey made by the United States Children's Bureau in July, 1945, shows only fifteen states out of forty-eight report employment of any nonwhite workers. Two-thirds of the 117 nonwhite workers were employed in four states—Indiana, Illinois, Ohio, and Virginia. The District of Columbia also employs nonwhite workers.

What is it that the child welfare worker does that requires specialized training? Are there particular skills and characteristics demanded of her in order for her to do an adequate job? If specialized skills are required, what contribution should the schools of social wel-



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The Illinois program for educating handicapped children in the public schools.

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